

# Agency for Cultural Affairs' Actions After the Great East Japan Earthquake

## 1 Supporting Reconstruction Through Art and Culture

### 1. Damage of cultural facilities and restoration efforts

The Agency for Cultural Affairs has been informed that the Great East Japan Earthquake reportedly caused 278 public cultural facilities to suffer from ceiling falls or breakage, breakage or destruction of lighting apparatuses and cracks in walls and floors.

Through a subsidy for the restoration of disaster-affected public social education facilities, the Agency for Cultural

Affairs has provided the affected public cultural facilities with governmental subsidies for restoration. In FY 2012, the Agency remains focused on restoration of public cultural facilities that should serve as hubs for culture and art in the affected areas.

### 2. Restoration efforts through art and culture

In FY 2011, the Agency for Cultural Affairs undertook a program for sending artists to schools and evacuation centers in affected areas with the aim of giving local children opportunities to experience art and culture. This program continues in FY 2012, pursuing an environment for children in the affected areas to grow up healthily through contact with art and culture.

The venue for one event in Asia Orchestra Week organized by the FY 2011 Agency for Cultural Affairs Art Festival was moved to Sendai. The Sendai Philharmonic Orchestra gave a joint concert with the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra from New Zealand, a country that suffered a large earthquake in February 2011. Along with the music, they delivered to the affected people their wishes for post-disaster reconstruction.

In May 2012, the Arts and Culture Consortium for Reconstruction was established with the aim of facilitating cross-disciplinary cooperation among administrative agencies, artists, art organizations, businesses, foundations and many other organizations and individuals in an effort to support the reconstruction of affected areas through art and culture. The Consortium is co-organized by the Association of Public Theaters and Halls in Japan and the Japan Council of Performers' Organizations. The Consortium develops a network of concerned people, organizations and agencies; facilitates activities to satisfy

needs in affected areas based on accurate understanding of facts through field survey and interviews; and develops a comprehensive network of information on support for affected areas.

One objective of the regional initiative for cultural and artistic creation and dissemination is spiritual renewal through culture and art. This is for the Agency for Cultural Affairs to support cultural and artistic endeavors of local public organizations in affected areas, and provision of opportunities to appreciate culture and art.

By staying updated on conditions in the affected areas, the Agency for Cultural Affairs will stay focused on the abovementioned activities aimed at helping effective reconstruction.



A program for sending artists to provide children with opportunities to experience culture and art  
Support for reconstruction after the Great East Japan Earthquake (Koriyama-shi, Fukushima)

The Great East Japan Earthquake on March 11, 2011 damaged numerous cultural properties. As of March 2012, 744 cultural properties, including nationally designated ones, were reported as damaged. As shown in Table 1, damaged cultural properties include almost all types of tangible and intangible cultural properties.

Since right after the earthquake, the Agency for Cultural Affairs has taken actions, through prefectural governments. For example, ACA gave necessary policies to facilitate restoration and reconstruction, such as a moratorium on legal obligations during an emergency, flexible application of excavation and research of buried cultural properties in the context of the reconstruction project, and actions taken in response to the emergency crisis level on cultural properties and buildings.

In cooperation with relevant local municipalities, ACA sent Senior Cultural Property Specialist when necessary in an effort to stay updated on the status of damage. Since the damaged properties were too much and spreaded across a wide area, ACA needed to ask related organizations for urgent cooperation in field research and preservation, and a system for mobilizing many specialists needed to be organized.

As shown in Figure 1 and photos 1 and 2, Rescue Program for Damaged Cultural Properties caused by the Great East Japan Earthquake, called The Cultural Property Rescue Program, was launched at an early stage for the purpose of urgently preserving affected movable cultural properties and works of art such as fine arts, crafts and tangible folk cultural properties, as well as preventing

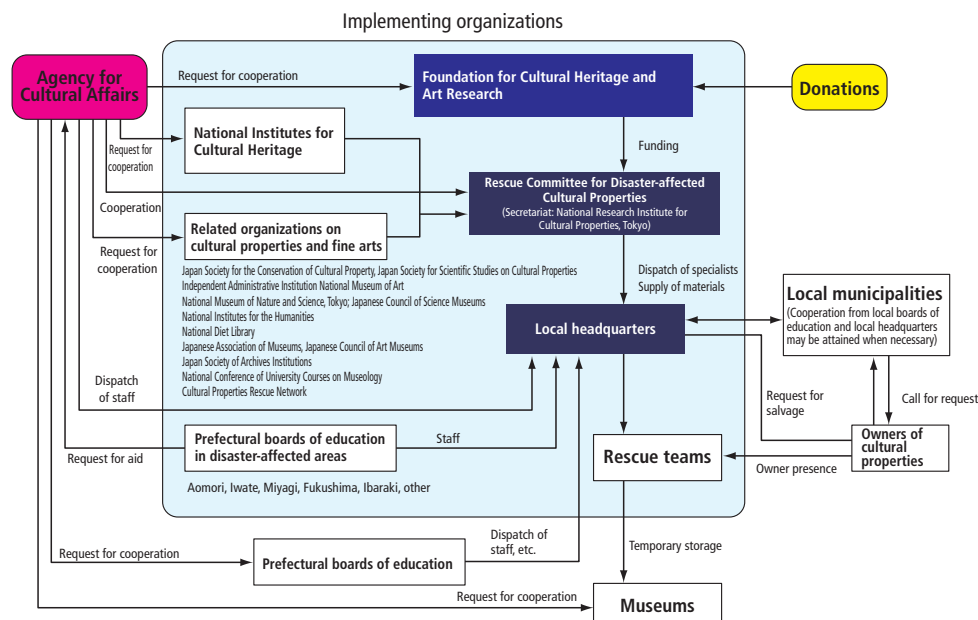
**Table 1. Number of nationally designated cultural properties damaged by the Great East Japan Earthquake**

Total: 744 (as of March 2012)

Since 10 of these properties have received multiple designations such as “historic site and place of scenic beauty,” the above figure does not correspond with the total number of cultural properties based on the type of designation.

Prefecture	National treasures	Important cultural properties	Special historic sites	Historic sites	Special place of scenic beauty	Place of scenic beauty	Natural monuments	Important preservation districts for group of traditional building	Important tangible folk cultural properties	Important intangible folk cultural properties	Important cultural landscape	Registered cultural properties			Total	
												Monuments	Building and other structures	Tangible folk cultural properties		
Aomori		1			2	1	1					5			10	
Iwate		14	2	1	8	1	3	1				38		1	69	
Miyagi	3	16	5	1	16	1	2	5			2	39			90	
Akita		2			1				1			7			11	
Yamagata		9										11			20	
Fukushima	1	13	6		18		3	3	1	1		31			77	
Ibaraki		17	4	1	9		1		1			151			184	
Tochigi		13			10						1	62	2		88	
Gunma		5	1		8							47			61	
Saitama		6	1		1				1			16			25	
Chiba		9	1		6		1	4	1			16			38	
Tokyo		19	1	3	6	3	3			2		12			49	
Kanagawa		7			1		1			1		2			12	
Niigata		1			1		1								3	
Yamanashi	1	5	1		1			1				1			10	
Nagano					1										1	
Shizuoka					1		1	2							4	
Mie		1													1	
Kochi											1				1	
Total	5	138	22	6	90	5	17	16	6	4	3	1	438	2	1	754

**Figure 1. Rescue Program for Damaged Cultural Properties Caused by the Great East Japan Earthquake: The Cultural Property Rescue Program**



disposal and scattering entailed in by the removal of destroyed buildings.

As shown in Figure 2 and photo 3, Operations for Retrieval and Recovery from the Great East Japan Earthquake, called the Dispatch Conservators for Historic Monuments, was launched with the aim of staying updated on the status of damage and providing emergency measures and technical assistance for restoration whenever requested by an owner, etc.

Gaining cooperation from local government, ACA sends specialists to affected areas for supporting the excavation of buried cultural properties amid the full-scale efforts to restore affected areas.

Through a program for using Tourism Promotion and Local Revitalization by Utilizing the Advantage of Cultural Heritage, ACA supports reconstruction efforts involving the use of cultural properties, museums and resource centers.

A recommendation from the Reconstruction Design Council titled “Towards Reconstruction: Hope Beyond the Disaster” states that, “In order to revive communities which have suffered setbacks due to damage from the earthquake disaster and the evacuation of residents, among other factors, it is necessary to advance the repair and restoration of the cultural properties. Further, assistance will be sought for the restoration, preservation, and succession of traditional events and dialects. In this way it is important to maintain the community identity by valuing the history and culture of the communities and passing on the cultural heritage.” The protection of cultural properties is regarded as essential for the restoration of affected areas. The Agency for Cultural Affairs will continue to support this restoration and reconstruction.



Photo 1. The Cultural Property Rescue Program



Photo 2. The Cultural Property Rescue Program



Photo 3. Dispatch Conservators for Historic Monuments

**Figure 2. Operations for Retrieval and Recovery from the Great East Japan Earthquake: Dispatch Conservators for Historic Monuments**

